

Monday, 5/13/13 B-SPACE Meeting School Committee Room, Town Hall, 6:00 PM			
Committee Members - present marked with "x"			
Betsy DeWitt	x	Philip Kramer	x
Alan Morse	x	Bill Lupini	x
George Cole	x	Michael Sandman	x
Katherine Craven	x	Rebecca Stone	x
Lisa Crossley	x	Fred Wang	
Ken Goldstein	x	Neil Wishinsky	x
Mel Kleckner	x	Michael Sandman	x

Also attending: Susan Wolf Ditkoff, Peter Rowe

Approval of 5/6/13 minutes

The committee approved the minutes of the 5/6/13 meeting. As promised, Chairman DeWitt provided Ms. Coyne with the attendance record for the 4/29/13 minutes which otherwise had been approved by the Committee.

Examination of the 8th and 9th grade Combination Alternative

Superintendent Lupini spoke to the alternative being considered of temporarily housing all 8th grade students in OLS (estimated to be between August of 2014 and August of 2017) while a new school facility was designed and built for all 8th and 9th graders in a location preferably adjacent enough to BHS to become part of its campus or alternatively and less attractively located elsewhere. One major advantage of this alternative would be to eliminate the need to renovate the high school, a substantial potential capital investment at best.

Dr. Lupini and his senior staff have concluded that this alternative is relatively unattractive from an education program point of view for the following reasons: It mixes middle school with high school challenges. Middle schools are usually organized in education teams whereas high schools are more frequently organized by departments.

There are only two grades. Research shows that this situation causes a lack of ownership sense by students. The evidence here is that buildings occupied by two grades, one just arriving and the other just departing, result in substantial degradation of instruction not evident when three or more grades are involved.

A greater number of student transitions are involved compared to a k-8 model. Transitions are difficult for many students, especially but not exclusively those with special learning challenges. True this could be somewhat mitigated if a location was possible in the high school campus. Right now this possibility appears remote. Special education programs become either much more expensive or less effective. Many of Brookline's special education programs span a number of grades and would have to be replicated at this facility.

In answer to Mr. Sandman, Ms. Ditkoff explained how the strategic plan review was coordinated with the B-Space deliberations. She described as the main issue whether or not the use of new education technology might influence the design of new space. She indicated that there were few if any ideas surfacing at the strategic plan meetings which would influence space design, principally because the community seemed to be quite averse to any change in the k-8 neighborhood school concept. One exception might be library spaces, which now frequently include areas for student team work involved with project learning.

Selectman Wishinsky observed that the Baldwin site is one of the most viable locations for a new k-8 school. On the other hand it is in a relatively poor location to deal with the center of our most aggressive student population growth.

Mr. Cole asked as to whether the OLS might be a better location for a new k-8 school, and in addition might require less capital to execute. Dr. Lupini has some concern about the unique demographic aspects of the OLS neighborhood.

After these questions and discussion, the Committee voted unanimously to take this option for an 8 or 8/9 configuration off the table. Members of the committee studying this option will each join one of the other subcommittees.

Outside Consultant Charges Recommended by Committee

With the support of the most recent MGT information rendered in 2009 and 2012 where relevant and MSBA standards, estimate the feasibility, including site, cost, timeline, and added capacity, for the following alternatives:

- Expansion at each of our K-8 schools except Devotion and Runkle, with recommendations for sequencing
- A larger, new K-8 school at one or more possible locations as identified by subcommittee #1 examining sites and redistricting.
- A smaller (450 student) K-8 school on the OLS site as identified by subcommittee #1 examining sites and redistricting.
- Development of the Cypress St. property for a single grade school as part of the BHS campus;
- Expansion east of the Unified Arts building for BHS classrooms;
- A new high school campus based on locations provided by subcommittee #1 examining sites and redistricting;
- Expansion at Lynch and Baldwin, including as space for displaced programs;

These options should be considered with the need to provide both short-term and long-term solutions: classrooms for current enrollment and projections, with flexibility to reconfigure for future enrollment decreases.

Draft Outline for Final Report

George Cole had developed a rough draft of a final report which was sent to the Committee beforehand. Mr. Cole made a short explanation regarding the rationale behind the outline. Mr. Morse then asked the Committee for suggestions with the following responses:

Towards the beginning of the report state and prioritize the assumptions influencing the Committee's recommendations. Examples might include student growth, demographic assumptions, pedagogic preferences, importance of k-8 neighborhood school configuration;

Include a list of the many alternative solutions considered along the way;

Special notation of community's apparent resistance to move away from the k-8 neighborhood school concept;

differentiate clearly between capital expenditure costs and operating costs.

Mr. Cole offered to take the above suggestions and incorporate them in to another draft for the next meeting.

Members met as re-formed subcommittees to discuss their assignments. All were invited to observe the mapping technology being used to demonstrate redistricting options.

Meeting adjourned at 9 PM

B-Space Committee - Report to the Brookline School Committee

Outline of Report

1. Executive Summary

2. The Challenge and the Opportunity

- a. Growing student population
- b. Changing education models

3. Financial Constraints

- a. Current budgeted capital projects
- b. Current and projected operating budgets
- c. Capacity to carry additional capital projects and operating costs

4. Review of Existing Facilities

- a. High School
 - i. Existing Condition
 - ii. Potential capacity
- b. K-8 Schools
 - i. Existing Condition
 - ii. Expansion capacity
- c. Other facilities
 - i. Lynch Center
 - ii. Baldwin School
 - iii. Old Lincoln School
- d. Potential sites for new facilities
 - i. Capacity
 - ii. Cost and schedule for acquisition

5. Options for school expansion

- a. New K-8 school
- b. New 8-9 school
- c. 8th grade at Old Lincoln
- d. Distributed expansions of K-8's
- e. Expansion of High School
- f. Others?

6. Assessment of Options

- a. Pedagogic
- b. Financial costs
- c. Schedule/ability to be implemented
- d. Political implications (redistricting, etc) and support for over-ride funding

7. Recommendations